



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

*** RECEIVED ***
Oct 12, 2004 16:03:53 WS# 06
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
CORRESPONDENCE
CONTROL CENTER

RECEIVED
04 OCT 12 AM 11:42
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
COMMUNICATIONS
CONTROL CENTER

September 24, 2004

TOM LATHAM
Congressman
4th District, Iowa

The Honorable Tommy G. Thompson
Secretary of Health and Human Services
United States Department of Health and Human Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Re: Docket No. 2004P-0223/CP 1

Dear Secretary Thompson:

I am writing to urge the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to give fair consideration to a petition currently pending before the FDA that would establish the descriptive claims "excellent source," "good source," and "made with" for whole grain content under the Agency's authority to prevent false and misleading food labeling statements (Docket No. 2004P-0223/CP 1). I believe the petition is consistent with your stated goal of working towards a healthier America.

As you know, the FDA created the Consumer Health Information for Better Nutrition (CHIBN) Initiative to assist consumers in making wise dietary choices by providing more and better information about conventional foods and dietary supplements that will help prevent disease and improve health. Among its recommendations, the CHIBN Task Force emphasized the need to improve consumers' understanding of health consequences from their dietary choices. It is in the spirit of such recommendation that I write to you today.

Virtually all advice to Americans about improving their diets includes the recommendation to eat more foods that contain whole grains. While studies conclude consumers are receptive to messages about nutrition and health and believe whole grains contain important nutritional qualities, actual consumption of whole grains is well below the recommended daily intake. Consumers remain unclear as to what actually constitutes a "whole grain" product. I believe that this petition would go a long way towards clearing up that confusion.

Further, considering the wide variety of foods that are or could be formulated to contain at least 8 grams of whole grain per serving (e.g., breads, pasta, breakfast cereals, side dishes, main meals and dinners, crackers, snack bars), it is likely that food manufacturers will respond to the availability of these claims by increasing products' whole grain content, thereby creating a greater variety of whole grain products on the market. Adoption of these claims may improve consumer understanding and, hopefully, will encourage consumption of whole grain foods.

Washington Office:
440 Cannon Building
Washington, DC 20515
202-225-5476
202-225-3301 Fax
1-866-428-5642 Toll Free

Ames Office:
213 North Duff Avenue, Suite 1
Ames, Iowa 50010
515-232-2885
515-232-2844 Fax

Clear Lake/Mason City Office:
812 Hwy 18 East
P.O. Box 532
Clear Lake, Iowa 50428
641-357-5225
641-357-5226 Fax

Fort Dodge Office:
1426 Central Avenue, Suite A
Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501
515-573-2738
515-576-7141 Fax

Email: tom.latham@mail.house.gov
Internet: www.house.gov/latham

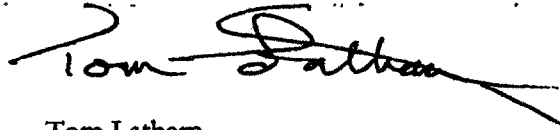
2004P-0223

C 10

I am committed to working with your Department and others toward a healthier America – action on this petition is a strong step in that direction. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Latham", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom Latham
Member of Congress

cc:

The Honorable Lester Crawford, D.V.M. Ph.D
Robert E. Brackett, Ph.D.